

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - NEW INTERIM AGREEMENT ON SINAI

1. SUMMARY. INDICATIONS OF GROWING SYRIAN AND SOVIET
OPPOSITION TO SINAI ACCORD ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN BEIRUT
PRESS TODAY, WITH ARAB NEWS AGENCY REPORTING THAT
PRESIDENT ASAD VISITED MOSCOW SECRETLY SHORTLY BEFORE
RECEIVING SECRETARY IN DAMASCUS WEDNESDAY. EDITORIALLY,
PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" CALLS FOR URGENT ARAB SUMMIT TO
DISCUSS SINAI ACCORD. LEADING PRO-EGYPTIAN "AL-ANWAR",
LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR", AND LEFTIST PRO-
NASSERITE "AS-SAFIR" FOR THEIR PART LINK CONTINUED
ISRAELI RAIDS ON LEBANON IN VARIOUS WAYS TO SINAI ACCORD.
PRO-SOVIET LCP ORGAN "AN-NIDA" PRAISES "HONORABLE ATTITUDE
OF SOVIET UNION" IN REFUSING TO ATTEND GENEVA SIGNING
CEREMONY. PRO-LIBYAN "AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI", PRO-IRAQI
"BEIRUT", AND, LESS STRIDENTLY, PRO-SOVIET AND OFTEN
PRO-EGYPTIAN "ASH-SHA'B" CONTINUE THEIR ATTACKS ON EGYPT
AND ON SINAI ACCORD, WITH "AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI" IN
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PARTICULAR CALLING ON ARAB MASSES TO "TOPPLE TRAITOR".

END SUMMARY.

2. STATEMENT BY SYRIAN BAATH PARTY COMMAND CONDEMNING SINAI ACCORD AS "SETBACK" TO ARAB STRUGGLE AND MESSAGE FROM SOVIET LEADERS TO ARAFAT ANNOUNCING SOVIET INTENTION NOT TO ATTEND SIGNING CEREMONY HIGHLIGHTED IN MOST PAPERS TODAY. PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" BANNERS: "SYRIA REJECTS TREASON ACCORD." IN SPECIAL DISPATCH, USUALLY WELL INFORMED ARAB NEWS AGENCY REPORTS PRESIDENT ASAD VISITED MOSCOW SECRETLY LAST TUESDAY TO CONFER WITH SOVIET LEADERS AND THEN RETURNED WEDNESDAY TO RECEIVE SECRETARY. ACCORDING TO ANA, ASAD'S TRIP TO MOSCOW IS AT ORIGIN OF "ALMOST IDENTICAL STANCE BY SOVIETS AND SYRIANS" ON ACCORD.

3. EDITORIALLY, "ASH-SHARQ", ECHOING YESTERDAY'S ANA REPORT (BEIRUT 11106), WRITES: "IN VIEW OF PROFOUND EFFECT THIS ACCORD WILL HAVE ON ARAB NATION ... IT IS NECESSARY TO CALL ARAB KINGS AND PRESIDENTS TO URGENT SUMMIT MEETING TO DISCUSS EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI-AMERICAN ACCORD ARTICLE BY ARTICLE ... AND FIND OUT WHETHER THERE IS CONFORMITY OR CONTRADICTION BETWEEN EGYPT'S ARAB COMMITMENTS AND ITS NEW COMMITMENTS TOWARDS ISRAEL AND U.S."

4. LINKING CONTINUED ISRAELI RAIDS ON LEBANON TO SINAI ACCORD, COLUMNIST RAFIQ KHURI OF "AL-ANWAR" WRITES: "ISRAEL USED TO SHELL LEBANON AND CAMPS WITHOUT FEAR OF RETALIATION. NOW, IT SHELLS WITHOUT FEAR OF ESCALATION... THIS SITUATION IS ONE OF MAIN GAPS IN SINAI ACCORD AT THIS STAGE, AND RESISTANCE IS TAKING PRECAUTIONS."

4. SIMILARLY, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR NAYIF SHUBLAQ OF "AL-MUHARRIR" WRITES: "WE MUST FACE BITTER FACT THAT WHAT KISSINGER DID IN SINAI WILL MAKE ENEMY MORE DARING AND ARROGANT IN ITS AGGRESSION, ESPECIALLY AGAINST PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE.... UNLESS PALESTINIAN PEOPLE OBTAIN ALL THEIR RIGHTS, MIDEAST WILL REMAIN MOST EXPLOSIVE POWDER KEG IN WHOLE WORLD."

5. COLUMNIST SHAWQI RAFI OF "AS-SAFIR" WRITES: "NO MATTER HOW MUCH GOOD WILL LEBANESE CITIZEN MAY HAVE, HE CANNOT BELIEVE THAT SHELLING, DESTRUCTION, KILLING, AND UNCLASSIFIED

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KIDNAPPING ON SOUTHERN FRONT IS INTERNAL ISSUE UNRELATED TO SINAI ACCORD OR TO MIDEAST IN GENERAL."

6. PRAISING SOVIET POSITION, COLUMNIST SUHAYL TAWILA OF "AN-NIDA" WRITES: "EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI ACCORD .. IS FIRST SERIOUS SHIFT IN AREA TOWARD RETURN OF AMERICAN DOMINATION.... BUT ARAB PEOPLE AND THEIR LIBERATION MOVEMENT WILL NOT FACE THIS FIERCE IMPERIALIST, ZIONIST,

REACTIONARY ONSLAUGHT ALONE. HISTORIC ATTITUDE ANNOUNCED
IN SOVIET LEADERS' MESSAGE TO ARAFAT ... CONFIRMS FIRM
AND HONORABLE ATTITUDE OF SOVIET UNION IN STANDING ON
SIDE OF ARAB PEOPLE."

7. AGAIN ATTACKING EGYPT AND SINAI ACCORD, CHIEF EDITOR
WALID AL-HUSAYNI OF "AL-KIFAH AL-''ARABI" WRITES: "UP TO
NOW, ARAB HOMELAND HAS NOT EXPLODED IN FACE OF SADAT'S
TREASON.... TREASON STILL REIGNS SUPREME AND ITS VOICES
CONTINUE TO FILL ARAB STAGE.... WE URGE MASSES OF ARAB
NATION TO EXERCISE THEIR PREROGATIVES IMMEDIATELY AND WORK
TO TOPPLE TRAITOR."

8. COLUMNIST ADNAN BADR OF "BEIRUT" WRITES: "REMOVAL OF
EGYPT FROM BATTLE HAS GREATLY INCREASED SHIFT OF MILITARY
POWER IN FAVOR OF ZIONIST ENEMY AND DEPRIVED NORTHERN
AND EASTERN FRONTS ... OF ABILITY TO WAGE NEW WAR AGAINST
ZIONIST ENEMY."

9. COLUMNIST MUHAMMAD NAQQASH OF "ASH-SHA'B" WRITES:
"ACCORD HAS GIVEN US A PILE OF SAND FROM OUR OWN OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES.... IF THIS COST SO MUCH, WHAT WILL
JERUSALEM, NOT TO MENTION WEST BANK, GAZA, AND GOLAN,
COST?"
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